

or stag so that man is an enemy to be as much avoided as the local carnivora.

P.O. GUDUR: NELLORE,
November 11, 1951.

K. M. KIRKPATRICK

3. MELANISM IN THE BARKING DEER (*MUNTIACUS MUNTJAC*)

In his interesting article 'Jungle Memories' Lt.-Col. E. G. Phythian-Adams (*Jour. B.N.H.S.* Volume 50, page 11) mentions shooting a Barking Deer with a sepia coloured coat. This probably was a melanistic specimen.

Melanism is not rare in this deer in the Darjeeling district; it usually takes the form of very dark brown. There is one such example mounted in the Darjeeling Natural History Museum. Nearly black animals have also been reported.

KENILWORTH,
COONOR, NILGIRIS,
November 10, 1951.

C. M. INGLIS, F.Z.S., C.M.B.O.U.

4. SAMBAR DEER IN MAURITIUS

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'Sir,

I have recently seen Mr. Kenneth Whitehead's article on deer, and in the hope that it may interest your readers, I send you a few notes on deer hunting in the island of Mauritius.

Deer (*Cervus rusa*) were introduced into the Colony from Batavia by the Dutch in 1639 and now roam in fairly large herds in the wooded districts of the island. Considering its small extent (720 square miles) and the fact that the shooting season lasts only three months, from June to August, it may appear exaggerated to state that 2,500 to 3,000 stags are shot every year. A morning's beat on one of the more extensive chasses, or hunting grounds, yields an average of thirty to forty stags.

A beat usually comprises thirty to forty guns disposed round the area chosen, which usually covers about 400 to 600 acres. The hunters are stationed on small platforms, or miradors, some 200 yards apart from each other. Fifty to a hundred native beaters and as many dogs are employed to dislodge the stags from the bushes and wooded areas, whence they are driven towards the plains and clearings, or chutes, prepared in advance. The stags are shot at while they are crossing these plains and clearings and the sportsmen thus have an excellent opportunity of displaying their marksmanship.

I enclose herewith two photographs, showing two adult stags and a morning's bag on my estate in the district of Black River.

Partridges and quails used to afford excellent sport not so long ago but are now practically extinct thanks to the Mongoose (*Herpestes*